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MAY 31 1993  
Pembroke State University  
Pembroke, NC 28572

# Carolina Indian Voice

Pembroke, NC

Robeson County

"Building communicative bridges in a tri-racial setting"

VOLUME 20 NUMBER 21

THURSDAY, MAY 27, 1993

25c per copy

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DENNIS LOWERY

## Honored at Military Academy in SC

Cadet Corey Mack Hunt, a freshman at Camden Military Academy in Camden, South Carolina, has been identified as a recipient of an honorary award recognition for Who's Who Among American High School Students and as a scholarship participant in a summer mathematics program at Montana State University. Over 14,000 high school students from across the United States are nominated annually for recognition as a Who's Who recipient, but only five percent of all nominated candidates receive this honorary award each year. As a Who's Who recipient, Cadet Hunt's biography will be published in the 1992-93 book, Who's Who Among High School Students.

From July 25 through August 13, Cadet Hunt will participate in a three week residential mathematics program on the campus of Montana State University with approximately 30 other high school sophomores from across the United States. Sponsored by the American Indian Science and Engineering Society with a grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. and the hosting university, the program is designed to prepare high potential American Indian students for entrance into mathematics, engineering and science based disciplines at the college level through comprehensive learning experiences at universities across the nation.

Throughout the 1992-93 school term, Cadet Hunt has maintained academic honors as well as recognition for exemplary self discipline and leadership. The son of Loretta Hunt, Cadet Hunt is an active youth member of Branch street United Methodist Church in Lumberton and a former student of Pembroke Middle School.



COREY MACK HUNT

## Local Student Serves as Page

Stephanie Kay Revels is a page for the House of Representatives appointed by Congressman Rose. Rose said, "Stephanie is the daughter of Carolyn and Earl Revels. Stephanie came to Washington DC on January 31, and will leave June 12, 1993". Home for Stephanie is Pembroke North Carolina where she attends South Robeson High School. A junior she plans to further her education at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill where she will study law.

"Keeping God first in everything I do makes the difference in my life," Stephanie said. She is a great student-athlete and has made honor roll all her life.



Hillary Holmes Ransom, was recently crowned "Little Miss Cumberland County Indian Princess, 1993-94". Competition was held in three categories, sportswear, Party wear and Native American Regalia. She is the seven year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Ransom of Fayetteville, and the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Normie Holmes of Lumberton and Mr. and Mrs. Erylle Ransom of Pembroke.

Hillary is a second grader at Alma Eason Elementary School, a member of Snyder Memorial Baptist Church and dances under the direction of Ms. Charlotte Hume.

## Billy Mills Comes To Robeson

The Public Schools of Robeson County, Title V Indian Education Project and Pembroke State University Chapter of AISES are co-sponsoring a performance by Billy Mills, a Lakota Sioux Indian who shocked the world with a victory in the 10,000 meter run at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. Today, the Gold Medalist is among the most dynamic speakers on the platform.

Mill, raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in south Dakota will be appearing at Givens Performing Arts Center at Pembroke State University, May 28, at 7:30 PM. The public is invited and admission is free. Local performers from area high schools will be: Lorna McNeil, Miss NC National Talent; Kenda Bird, Jr. Miss Lumbee 1993, and Adrenna Locklear, Jr. Miss Lumbee 1992.

## Plate Sale For Bone Marrow Fund

Indian Solidarity, Inc., has established the Native American Bone Marrow Transplant Fund. The Fund will be used to defray medical expenses involved in the Bone Marrow Transplant procedure. All donations are tax deductible. A plate sale will be held on Friday, June 4, 1993, at the Pembroke Town Park from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Proceeds will go into the Native American Bone Marrow Transplant Fund.

Chicken and barbecue plate will be available for \$4.00 each. Tickets are on sale from members of Indian Solidarity. Sam Kerns and Cliff Sampson are co-chairmen of the plate sale. A drawing will also be held in the afternoon and some lucky ticket holder will win a color television.

## Dennis Lowery Selected Entrepreneur Of The Year Award Winner

by Barbara Braveboy-Locklear

One 1975 November morning stands out in the memory of Pembroke, NC native, Dennis Lowery. His years of dreaming and hard work seemed about to fall apart. Two months into the launch of his fledgling business, Continental Industrial Chemicals, Inc., he got a call at home that one of his drivers had an accident. He says in a frantic attempt to get to the plant, he backed out of his driveway into another car, injuring that driver.

When he showed up at work hours later a police officers was there to serve him a summons; a much larger company had sued him for breach of contract. "I picked up the summons and went into the plant," Lowery remembers. "I climbed up on a drum of chemical, and I sat in the dark and cried and cried. I thought there was no way out." Two hours later when he was all cried out, Lowery got mad, then determined.

"I washed my face and called all my employees, five or six at the time," he says, "and I told them we were going to win, and that we would sell more and perform better than everyone else." Hard work and determination paid off Lowery. On May 13 the Charlotte, NC Chamber awarded him its 1993 ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD. He was picked from a field of 26 nominees for the award which recognized annual sales of \$59 million and 167 employees.

While he is proud of his ethnic heritage, Dennis Lowery disputes those who attribute his success in business to his being a member of a minority group. "The 51-year-old Lumbee Indian says being a minority opened some doors and made introductions. Beyond that, however, Lowery says the major factors in the growth of his business portfolio are marketing strategies and an emphasis on employee's welfare.

A lack of capital has never hindered the Charlotte entrepreneur. He started in sales at age seven, shining shoes, and helped support himself by washing cars, from fifth grade through college. He was graduated from Pembroke State College (now Pembroke State University) in 1964 and came to Charlotte with \$17 in his pocket. He worked in the pharmaceutical industry for two years, and then for nine year in the chemical industry. It was during his years as a sales representative and sales manager for two of his current competitors that Lowery decided to start a distribution company to tap markets he says were not being touched.

Lowery, along with Bob Elliot, formed Industrial Chemicals, Inc., now Continental Industrial Chemicals, Inc. in 1975 with \$15,000. of their own and a loan from the Small Business Administration. The loan was well-earned. Lowery applied for it 17 times, and was turned down the first 16. He asked for \$100,000. The \$45,000 he finally got tided him over for the first two and a half months. By then, the SBA was willing to talk real business—the firm's sales in its first month were \$180,000. The company's been in the black ever since.

The Charlotte-based corporation has 1,100 customers in 52 states and three foreign countries. The firm repackages and distributes industrial chemicals such as jet-fuel additive, anti-freeze, de-icing fluid and chemicals used in cosmetics. Continental delivers chemicals in drums, tank trucks, rail cars and sometimes barges. Among its customers are DuPont, R.J. Reynolds, Owens-

Corning, General Tire, Uniroyal, and Union Carbide. In addition to three plant sites on Hovis Road in Northwest Charlotte, and a national sales division on Coronation Blvd. at Crown Point, CICI currently owns and operates distribution centers in Chesterfield, Va. and Greenville, SC.

Continental Industrial Chemicals is the largest Native American owned corporation in the United States, according to the North Carolina commission of Indian Affairs. Last year the company was ranked 98th in sales in the North Carolina 100 program of privately held corporations.

Lowery currently holds interest in two other companies; Kelmur Industries, a textile formulating company which operates out of Spartanburg, SC, and NACON, a subcontracting commercial firm located in Charlotte. Early this year, Lowery stepped down as President of CICI and became Chief Executive Officer of the Continental Group, a holding company which oversees operations of the collective corporations. The Continental Group occupies seven facilities with a total of 255,000 sq.ft. and operates with 34 pieces of equipment which include tank trucks, trailers, boxes and short trucks.

Of the 167 people employed by the corporations, 70 percent are women who hold 63 percent of the sales and managerial positions. Collective annual sales of the Continental Group are \$59 million, and collective assets exceed \$14 million. Lowery's business accomplishments have not gone un-noticed. In 1978 he was named Small Business Person of the Year by Metrolina Native American Association. A year later, he received North Carolina's Small Business Person of the Year award, and was named "Tur Heel of the Week" by THE NEWS AND OBSERVER. In 1990 he was a finalist for Entrepreneur of The Year for North Carolina. He currently serves on several corporate boards and holds membership in numerous business organizations.

In 1988 Lowery formed the now defunct business arm of Metrolina Native American Association. The group helped develop Indian-owned businesses, especially through counseling their owners. Lowery still counsels Indian owners of small businesses. Perhaps his greatest contribution to community has been through his involvement with youth. He continually reminds young people that their ethnic heritage, coupled with hard work, can become a strength in overcoming social and economical prejudices against them.

Lowery works with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system's Indian Education Program, a federal project of the U.S. Office of Indian Education. For the past 15 years, he has worked with the program which sponsors an annual Career Day at Central Piedmont Community College, where he often speaks. For years, Lowery has quietly given financial assistance towards the education of youth attending college at his Alma Mater and on whose Board of Trustees he served as Chairman from 1987-88.

Lowery says that to run a business today, one has to have a road map drawn out. "My first concern here at The Continental Group is how we service customers". By any standard of measure, Lowery has accomplished the impossible in stretching \$17 into millions over a period of two decades.

## Strawberry Festival

The Eastern Carolina Tuscarora Nation will celebrate its annual Strawberry Thanksgiving on June 5, 1993 (Saturday) at the Sovereign Nation in the Prospect Community. The Strawberry Thanksgiving is celebrated each year when the strawberries come off. It is celebrated on all the Six Nations reserves, to thank the Creator for the berries that he gives to his children. Events this year will include; Social Dancing (Iroquois) by the Tuscarora Kau-Ta-Noh Society Social Dancers,

a LaCrosse Team, arts and crafts by Tuscarora and Seneca crafts people, games (volleyball, grease pole, etc.), food including plenty of strawberries, and strawberry drink.

The festival is open to the public with a special invitation to all our Mexican Indian Friends. Craft booths will open at about 10:00 a.m. For more information call (919) 521-4955, 521-8534, or 521-8978.

## Applications Available For Junior Miss Lumbee Pageant

Applications will be available for the Junior Miss Lumbee Pageant beginning June 1, 1993. The age category is 13 to 15 years of age. Contestants must be 13 by October 1, 1993. Contestants can not be 16 before November 9, 1993.

at the Givens Performing Arts Center on the Pembroke State University campus. Admission will be \$5 per person.

The first 15 applications returned with the registration fee will be accepted. Registration fee is \$75.00. The pageant will be held October 9, 1993 at 7:30 p.m.

Applications may be obtained at the Adult Education Office in Pembroke, NC. Questions may be directed to Monroe Chavis at 521-8602 or Gladys Freeman at 521-2462. Application deadline is July 16, 1993.